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HOUSE MEMORIAL 38

46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2003

INTRODUCED BY

Nick L. Salazar

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR, THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION, THE STATE GAME COMMISSION AND THE VALLES CALDERA NATIONAL PRESERVE TO WORK WITH THE UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE IN ASSURING SCIENCE-BASED DECISION-MAKING AND PROTECTION OF LOCAL CUSTOM, CULTURE AND ECONOMY.

WHEREAS, livestock production in the forests of northern New Mexico and elsewhere in the state has been a part of the customs, culture and economy for more than four hundred years; and

WHEREAS, drought has been a regular part of environmental cycles over that time; and

WHEREAS, livestock numbers in New Mexico forests have been declining since the early 1900s, largely at the direction of the United States forest service; and

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1 WHEREAS, elk numbers have been increasing exponentially
2 since their introduction during the last century; and

3 WHEREAS, forest health has been steadily declining for
4 decades, leading to negative impacts on the customs, culture
5 and economy of northern New Mexico and across the state; and

6 WHEREAS, there has been a lack of coordinated management
7 of elk populations in the forests of northern New Mexico,
8 including the Valles Caldera national preserve; and

9 WHEREAS, this lack of management has resulted in harm to
10 both the forests and livestock-producing families in the
11 region; and

12 WHEREAS, the current drought has compounded all these
13 negative impacts; and

14 WHEREAS, it is only the livestock producers, their
15 families and their local economies that are paying the
16 consequences of the lack of management of forest health and elk
17 populations, as well as the drought;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
19 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the governor
20 and the New Mexico congressional delegation be requested to
21 work with the United States forest service to ensure that only
22 sound, peer-reviewed science be used in decision-making
23 processes; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor and the New
25 Mexico congressional delegation work with the United States

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1 forest service to ensure that the customs, culture and economic
2 viability of the local communities of northern New Mexico and
3 across the state are not harmed by actions of the agency; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States forest
5 service work cooperatively with the state game commission, the
6 department of game and fish and the Valles Caldera national
7 preserve to ensure that elk populations do not displace local
8 families and local economies; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
10 transmitted to the United States forest service, the New Mexico
11 congressional delegation, the governor and the department of
12 game and fish.